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By-Walther, Regis H.

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Reported is the first phase of a project to evaluate the effectiveness of selected Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC) programs. Effectiveness was judged by community and work adjustment of enrollees. Experimental and control groups were selected in four cities; samples were mainly Negroes, with more females than males. Findings from interviews with the sample subjects showed that the program was effective but needs improvement in the racial and sex balance of enrollees as well as in the work adjustment objectives of NYC (even among the NYC enrollees unemployment was high). Noted is the need for attention to such policy issues as more effective job development, coordination between various vocational training programs, improved remedial efforts, followup counseling, and the differential needs of enrollees. For subsequent, related research see UD 007 866 and UD 007 867. This document is a summary of ED 020 407. (NH)

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A SUMMARY OF RETROSPECTIVE STUDIES OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF NYC OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN FOUR URBAN SITES

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Social Research Group
The George Washington University
Washington, D.C.
Regis H. Walther
Principal Investigator

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RETROSPECTIVE STUDIES OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF NYC OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN FOUR URBAN SITES

This paper reports the first phase of a research project, supported by the Office of Manpower Policy, Evaluation, and Research designed to evaluate the effectiveness of selected urban out-of-school Neighborhood Youth Corps programs through use of Experimental and Control groups. The primary criteria established for judging NYC program effectiveness were community and work adjustment. Retrospective samples were used in the initial phase of the research to get usable information about program effectiveness during the first year of the study. Prospective and program component studies are also being conducted as part of the overall research design.

For the retrospective study, Experimental and Control samples were constituted in each of four research sites: Cincinatti, Ohio; Durham, North Carolina; East St. Louis, Illinois; and St. Louis, Missouri. The Experimental sample was composed of enrollees whose NYC experience dated from the fall and winter of 1965-66, or a little more than a year prior to the date of follow-up interviews conducted in the winter and spring of 1967. The Control samples were composed of similar youths who had not enrolled in NYC.

Interviewers ascertained the current activity of 438 subjects in the retrospective Experimental sample and completed interviews for 392 of these individuals. The comparable figures for the Control group were 238 located and 205 interviewed. Within the Experimental sample, usable information was obtained on 83% of the subjects and full interviews were completed for 74%. While the completion rate for the Control group was substantially lower (66% located and 60% interviewed), the interviewed subjects in the Experimental and Control samples were found to be closely matched on a number of variables including sex, race, age,

highest school grade completed, percentage living in public housing, and percentage receiving welfare. In both samples, the largest percentage of subjects was made up of Negro females (60%) and Negro males comprised the next largest percentage (30%). About seven percent of the youths studied were white males and about three percent, white females. The average age of the subjects at the time of interview was a little over 20 years and the highest grade completed, about 10th grade.[1]

The data from this study provided substantial evidence that the out-of-school NYC programs at the four research sites were improving the work and community adjustment of disadvantaged youth. The most significant findings[2] were:

The program is reaching seriously disadvantaged youth. Approximately 25% of the Experimental subjects were young people whose families were dependent upon welfare assistance; and less than one-third of them had intact two-parent families. The average enrollee had not completed the 10th grade, and had been out of school for over 17 months at the time of registration. Approximately one-third of the female subjects left school because of pregnancy and about 40% of the males had police records. In Cincinnati, where school records were studied, the average IQ score was a little over 80 and academic performance was poor.

[1]See Table 1, attached, for more detailed information about the samples.

[2]Statistical tests of significance were applied to the data, and no difference between groups was considered significant unless it reached the .05 level of confidence.

The interviewed enrollees reported a high level of satisfaction with their NYC experience. Enrollees gave a high rating to the program, to the type of work performed, to the helpfulness of their supervisors and counselors, to the friendliness of their fellow workers, and most of them thought that the NYC experience was or would be a help in getting a job.

Community and work adjustment of enrollees was improved on several measures. Compared to young persons in the Control group, youth with NYC experience had more supplemental and remedial education, were more frequently self-supporting, and were less likely to be unemployed. Police contacts following NYC enrollment were significantly reduced at two of the sites. Almost all of the improvement of enrollees in the areas of employment[1], self-support[2], and lowered police contact reflected the female subsample. In the male subsample, the most significant improvement associated with NYC enrollment was greater participation in academic and vocational education since leaving school. About one out of four of the Experimental subjects were still enrolled in NYC at the time of interview. Comparison with the Control sample suggests that unemployment seems to be the principal alternative to NYC for females, while military service is the principal alternative for males.

[1]See Table 2, attached, for more detailed information about employment.

[2]See Table 3, attached, for more detailed information about self-support

These interview results provided evidence of program effectiveness: but, at the same time, they pointed to problems areas in the program. For example, the studied programs did not appear to be as effective with males or white females as they were with Negro females; and rates of unemployment remained high among ex-enrollees. There were too few white females in the sample for any separate statistical analysis of this group. This small number may be due to the lack of need; that is, white females may be able to find jobs without assistance. Alternatively, it may be due to recruiting practices or to the image projected by NYC to this group. The few white females who did apply for the NYC program had dropped out of school at an earlier grade, had been out of school longer, were more pessimistic about their chances of achieving their occupational goals, and were given a lower rating by the interviewer on their appearance, speech, and approach than were Negro females. While these differences were statistically significant, the number of subjects was so small that it is hazardous to draw definite conclusions. The possibility should be considered, however, that there may be disadvantaged white females who could benefit from the NYC program but who are not applying. If this turns out to be the case, consideration should be given to ways of effectively involving them in the program. To a lesser degree, the same questions may be raised with respect to white males.

It seems probable that part of the explanation for the favorable finding with respect to Negro females is that they are easier to work with than are males, they have more interest in improving themselves, and they have a more difficult time obtaining job training or job placement without assistance. On the average, females were better educated than males, had fewer contacts with police, and im-

pressed the interviewers as being more interested in the interview and as having better speech in terms of clarity, fluency, and grammatical correctness. A factor contributing to the poorer results with males, nevertheless, may be the character of work assignments most frequently reported by male enrollees, maintenance and unskilled labor. Such assignments may offer limited opportunity for on-the-job training. The NYC program might have a more positive effect on males if a greater variety of NYC jobs with more career potential could be developed for them.

Although youth in the Experimental group had relatively less unemployment than those in the Control group, 28% of the Experimental subjects were unemployed at the time of their interview. The percentage of unemployment increased to 38% when subjects still enrolled in the NYC were excluded. The comparable percentage for the Control group was 42%. It must be concluded that the NYC experience was a substantial factor in reducing unemployment, but it also must be recognized that the programs' work adjustment objectives have not yet been fully realized.

In summary, while the results of this study cannot be generalized to all NYC programs since the programs studied were specially selected, the data demonstrate achievements but also highlight problem areas. Since the time reflected in this study, many improvements in the programs have been made in each of the cities serving as research sites, and it is reasonable to assume that better results are now being obtained. The prospective studies currently under way will test this assumption. A second follow-up interview is planned for the first part of 1968, at which time an additional year will have elapsed since the date of application. On the basis of data developed from these interviews, it should be possible to test more adequately the hypothesis that NYC experience is associated with improved work and community adjustment.

Even at this early stage in the research, the results raise policy issues to be considered by program administrators and suggest areas needing further research exploration. Several of the more important issues are discussed below.

Job Development

Public employment agencies have developed programs, such as the YOC, designed specifically to help disadvantaged groups; but, our research results indicate that, for the most part, they are not yet giving substantial assistance to the types of youth enrolled in the NYC program. For example, only about 10% of the subjects in our sample said that they first heard of their most recent job through these agencies.

There seems to be an inevitable conflict between the point of view of public and private employment agencies and the NYC stemming from different criteria for judging program success. The number of successful placements has been the traditional standard against which an employment agency has judged its performance. The employer becomes the most important client to be satisfied and the best way to satisfy him is to send qualified candidates for all job openings. When poorly qualified candidates are sent, the employer may stop using the employment agency for recruitment. Under these circumstances, there may be a tendency for employment counselors to be reluctant to refer the typical out-of-school enrollee for a job since such youth are frequently employment risks. On the other hand, the NYC should judge its success by the number of youth it can place successfully into jobs. Its client becomes the youth himself. Risks have to be taken; the eventual adjustment of the youth to the world of work is more important than the job failures which may occur while the youth is learning to make this adjustment.

In the absence of effective job placement programs, the local NYC administrators may have no alternative to doing their own job development. Cincinnati, for example, has an energetic program of locating jobs and opening up employment opportunities; and, as a result, 48% of the subjects in the Experimental sample at this site reported that they first heard about their most recent job through the NYC. Another effective technique is to assign enrollees to jobs which can lead to full-time employment. As an example, subjects in the Experimental sample in St. Louis had all been assigned to a hospital work-site, and about 40% of the ex-enrollees who were employed at the time of interview were performing work similar to that performed as enrollees.

Job Corps

The vocational training program most closely paralleling the NYC is the Job Corps. Our observations indicated that there is little formal coordination between these two programs. Individual counselors may, through their own efforts, work out informal cooperative relationships which permit some type of coordination but we found this to be unusual. On a number of occasions we asked NYC counselors what they would do if they had an enrollee who was functioning very poorly at home and needed the kind of controlled environment which was possible in a Job Corps camp. In most cases, the counselors indicated that while they knew what the application procedures were, they had no confidence that admission could be arranged within any reasonable period of time or, for that matter, that admission could be arranged at all. These relationships were reflected in our data in that we found less than five percent of our sample had ever enrolled in the Job Corps.

The NYC and the Job Corps are working with similar populations and are

attempting to solve similar kinds of problems. The NYC works with youths in the community and provides comparatively limited services. The Job Corps moves the youth from his community, and provides comprehensive services. At present, the decision as to whether the youth should be enrolled in the Job Corps or in the Neighborhood Youth Corps is based on chance factors rather than on judgment as to whether he would do better in the community or benefit more from getting away from home. These considerations suggest a need for coordinating NYC and Job Corps assignment policies and for determining through research which youths need Job Corps experience and which ones can be trained best in their own community. Otherwise, some youths may be sent away from home at considerable cost to the Government when their problems could be more economically and effectively dealt with at home. On the other hand, there are other youths who need to get away from their home environment and can be expected to profit from Job Corps training.

MDTA

The MDTA (Manpower Development and Training Act) including its OJT (On-the-job Training) aspects is an alternative program theoretically available to NYC enrollees for vocational skill training. The MDTA establishments in the several sites were impressive - and frustrating to both MDTA and NYC personnel. MDTA wanted more trainees, and NYC wanted to place enrollees as trainees; but, procedural problems stood in the way. At the time our samples were participating in the NYC programs, however, these auxillary programs had been used by not more than one or two percent of our samples. It appears that at the present time the NYC program is not geared into the MDTA programs to any material extent and that most of the youths who leave the NYC program go directly into the employment market primarily through referrals made by the NYC or by friends and relatives.

Remedial Education

All of the NYC programs we surveyed have had difficulty finding adequate facilities for educating out-of-school youths and motivating the youths when facilities are available. The problem lies both in the attitude of the enrollee toward the school and the attitude of the school toward enrollees. Many schools do not want these youths, have enrouraged them to leave, and make it difficult for them to return to full-time school.

Another difficulty reducing the tendency of youth to continue education is the gap between the requirement that evening school students be 18 years old and the regulation of regular school permitting the youth to drop out at 16 years of age. Thus, frequently evening school is not available to the youth between 16 and 18 years of age.

NYC programs have tried three different approaches for improving the basic educational level of enrollees. Some programs have organized educational opportunities outside of the school system. Others have attempted to arrange additional resources within the school system itself, and still others have tried to integrate basic education with work experience.

The programs which organize educational opportunities outside of the school system are based on the assumption that the enrollees are already negatively conditioned to formal school and that it is better to start afresh and provide them with opportunities which do not have the negative connotations of conventional schooling. Such classes are conducted during the evening hours, in locations outside of the school building, in small groups, and with a considerable amount of freedom for the student. Durham has such a program and our interview results showed that 63% of the

male subjects in the Experimental sample as compared with only nine percent of the male subjects in the Control sample reported attending educational or vocational classes after dropping out of school. While these results are highly encouraging, our observations suggest that such programs tend to depend on the personal commitment of the administrators and teachers, and may lose their effectiveness under adverse conditions when enthusiasm wanes.

The programs conducted within school systems which we reviewed are administered by school personnel during the regular school day and are taught by teachers who are part of the school system. These programs have the advantage of institutional stability but can suffer from lack of enthusiasm from a tendency of school systems to assign uninspired personnel to this kind of work. School system programs and programs combining education and work experience were at too early a stage of development to be reflected in our data.

An important goal of NYC administrators should be to stimulate the local school system to expand its services and to experiment with innovative approaches which may improve the quality of remedial education programs for youths between 16 and 22. In the absence of effective remedial education programs run by the local school system, it becomes necessary to organize such programs through the NYC program. In phase II of our research we plan to study several experimental efforts to use Job Corps remedial education materials in Neighborhood Youth Corps settings.

Follow-up Counseling

There was widespread belief among NYC staff that many enrollees who obtained outside jobs were still somewhat deficient in their skills, attitudes, and knowledge of the requirements of the working world. This belief is supported by

the high rate of unemployment of ex-enrollees. It is possible that many of them lost jobs which they might have kept if they had received advice and support during crisis periods. Some counselors said that they kept in touch with enrollees informally after they left the program and that enrollees sometimes came back on their own for advice. Follow-up counseling is not provided systematically and consideration might be given to increasing the effectiveness of the NYC program by providing counseling assistance to ex-enrollees during the transition period while they are making their adjustment to the world of work.

Differential Needs of Enrollees

In the NYC programs studied, little effort was made to appraise the needs of enrollees and to tailor work assignments or training to meet these needs. Existing tests of aptitude and skills have not proved to be particularly useful within the NYC setting and there is a widely felt need for diagnostic procedures specifically geared to the needs of enrollees. Our observations indicate the deficiencies of these youth can be grouped into three general areas.

Some deficiencies result from inadequacies in the opportunities for educational experiences available to the youth both in the formal school system and through their family experience. These are examples of system failures resulting in disadvantage to the individual regardless of his attitude or motivations. Within this category are two sub-types, a disadvantaged graduate group and an adverse situation group. Many disadvantaged youth have been found who have graduated from the school system without having learned the basic skills necessary to function in jobs requiring language facility (disadvantaged graduate group). Other well-socialized individuals drop out of school because of some situational factor such

as the need to support their families, pregnancy, etc. (adverse situation group). Such individuals have been caught in circumstances beyond their control and need the opportunity to fill in gaps in their formal education.

A second area of disadvantage results from a poor attitude toward authority and work. Many disadvantaged youth have not developed sufficient self-discipline to be able to meet the requirements of a job and have a suspicious attitude toward persons in authority (rebel group). They do not particularly feel that persons in authority are on their side and have not found that their needs can be met by complying with the requirements of authority. Until this is changed, they have great difficulty fitting into a working environment.

The third area of disadvantage is related to the self-concept of individuals coming from deprived environments (low self-esteem group). Having had bad experiences in the past, they tend both to view the world as hostile and antagonistic and to have doubts about their own capacity to obtain satisfactions from the world. Youth in this group, while they frequently need the most help, are often the most difficult to work with. It appears that the best strategy for improving self-esteem is to provide opportunities for experiences with success and to help the individual interpret these successes as worthwhile achievement.

These categories - the disadvantaged graduate, the adverse situation, the rebel, and the low self-esteem groups - are offered as hypotheses to be tested by carefully designed research. It is not, of course, possible to tailor the NYC program to fit each individual's needs; but it should be possible to develop broad strategies or "program mixes" appropriate to the principal kinds of deficiencies, thus permitting a flexible response to the needs of the enrollee. During phase II

of our research, we plan to begin the development of measures for classifying enrollees into these categories and evaluating their progress while they are participating in the NYC program.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF INTERVIEWED EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL SUBJECTS ON SELECTED VARIABLES

Variable	Experimental Sample (N=392)	Control Sample (N=205)	CL[a]
	Percentage of Sample	Percentage of Sample	
Negro Female	62	59	ns
Negro Male	30	26	ns
White Male	6	11	.05
White Female	2	4	ns
Single	72	68	ns
Lives in Public Housing	15	12	ns
Family Receives Welfare Payments	25	23	ns
Lived in Present Area Over 5 Years	87	82	ns
Lived in Present Neighborhood Over 5 Years	41	44	ns
Took Vocational Course in School	35	36	ns
Had Observable Physical Defect	10	5	.05
Had a Recorded Police Contact Prior to Registration Date[b]	28	32	ns
	Mean of Sample	Mean of Sample	
Age (as of February, 1967)	20.4	20.3	ns
Highest School Grade Completed	9.8	10.0	ns
Months Out of School at Registration Date[b]	17.4	14.3	.05
Number of Children	.8	.7	ns

[a]CL (Confidence Level) represents the degree of assurance that observed differences did not occur through chance. Exact probabilities are reported for CL's of .05 and less; that is, differences that could have occurred through chance less than 5 times in 100. The notation "ns" (not significant) indicates that, in the judgment of the author, the observed result should be attributed to chance. Ordinarily, "ns" represents CL's greater than .05.

[b]In order to compare the two samples on this variable, a single date representing the inception of NYC experience in the Experimental sample in each site was used. This date is an average registration date.

TABLE 2

ACTIVITY AT TIME OF INTERVIEW[a]

Activity	Experimental Sample			Control Sample		
	Male (N=178)	Female (N=260)	Total (N=438)	Male (N=105)	Female (N=133)	Total (N-238)
	Percentage			Percentage		
Total in labor force	86	87	86	86	77	81
In civilian labor force	77	87	82	62	77	70
Employed	48	59	54	33	24	28
In NYC	11	31	23	0	0	0
Outside NYC	37	28	31	33	24	28
Unemployed	29	28	28	29	53	42
In military labor force	9	0	4	24	0	11
Total not in labor force	14	13	14	15	23	19
Housewife	0	9	5	0	12	7
School	1	3	2	3	7	5
Job Corps	3	0	2	3	1	2
Training programs	22	1	2	4	1	2
Jail	6	0	2	5	0	2
Other	2	0	1	0	2	1
Total population[b]	100	100	100	101	100	100

[a]Includes subjects whose present activity was determined through informants as well as personal interview.

[b]Due to rounding error, totals do not always equal 100 percent.

TABLE 3

PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF SUPPORT,
TIME OF INTERVIEW

Source	Experimental Sample			Control Sample		
	Male (N-140)	Female (N=252)	Total (N=392)	Male (N=77)	Female (N=128)	Total (N=205)
	Percentage			Percentage		
Earnings	59	44	49	58	23	36
Unemployment compensation	0	0[a]	0[a]	0	1	1
Welfare	6	13	10	9	16	13
Family	30	17	22	29	28	28
Spouse	1	19	13	1	24	15
Training	2	0[a]	1	1	0	1
Other	2	6	5	2	8	6
Total	100	99	100	100	100	100

[a]Less than .5